

# The Art of Self Promotion

Self-promotion is a talent most successful people have in common, and one you can develop even if you hate the idea of 'bragging'. Self-promotion is the art of promoting your strengths consistently, subtly, and professionally, and reflects that you have confidence in your skills and abilities.

The key to the success of self-promotion rests with who you talk to and what you say. Make sure you target clients, prospects, colleagues and influencers; and that what you say builds relationships, proves your professional credibility, proves your industry and business knowledge, and shows an interest in working for or with the person. Almost anything you do – provided you keep these golden rules in mind – will be effective.

The following list of tactics is by no means exhaustive, but hopefully it will stimulate ideas for how you can tactfully and comfortably promote yourself.

## Be prepared

1. Elevator pitch – have a short, sharp, concise and benefit-focussed phrase (which you have practiced) that explains what you do. When someone inquires 'what do you do?' reply with more enthusiasm and originality than 'I'm a lawyer' or 'I'm an accountant'.
2. Business cards – always have a supply of business cards and take them everywhere.
3. Profile and CV – have a well-written and experience-focussed professional profile and CV that you can supply to people when appropriate. Always keep these documents up-to-date.
4. Capability statement – have a comprehensive and current capability statement available that includes your areas of expertise, your experience, your client base (even if it doesn't "name names"), testimonials from your clients, your team's profiles and your fee structure.

## Build Relationships

5. Be sociable – networking is vitally important as it raises your profile and builds your network of contacts. Go to industry lunches or dinners, have coffee with your clients, go to breakfast seminars or all-day conferences. Attend functions or meet with people one-on-one.



6. Engage people – start conversations whenever you have the opportunity. Find out about people and talk about yourself. Forget the childhood lesson of not talking to strangers.
7. Build referral channels – team up with professionals in other industries and identify synergies for serving your clients (and their clients) better.
8. Follow-up on the work you've done – make sure your clients are satisfied with your work and then ask if there is anything else you can do to help.
9. Get to know your clients – go on-site to your clients, meet their teams and meet their clients if you can. The more people you know within the industry you work the better.
10. Match-make – one of the best things you can do is play corporate cupid. If you know someone who needs a good accountant (or a business consultant or an IT specialist etc), and you know one, match them up. Everyone wins.
11. Community – serving your community is a great way to meet people from all walks of life and show your qualities as a person. Join a committee at your church, get involved at your kids' kindergarten, or fundraise for your sporting team.
12. Appointments – another form of community service is through appointments to boards, committees and associations.

## Share Information

13. Media clippings – if you read an article that is relevant to someone in your network, clip it or scan it and send it to them. You'll look well-informed and up-to-date, you'll show that you are thinking of the person, and you'll remind them that you're out there.
14. Articles – write an article for an industry or trade journal. You'll gain widespread profile with the target audience, and you'll gain credibility as an expert in that topic.
15. Seminars – present at a seminar, join a panel, or present a paper at a conference. As with writing articles, you'll benefit from a higher profile and you'll be recognised as an expert in your field.
16. Newsletters – whether you write a lengthy and frequent publication, or an ad hoc e-mail snippet, newsletters give you an opportunity to raise your profile and show you are up-to-date.
17. Phone calls – e-mails are great, but phone calls are better. Ring people to keep them up-to-date on things you think they need to know.

Self-promotion doesn't need to be seen as 'boasting'. There are tactful and professional ways of promoting yourself. Be humble but proud of what you have accomplished. Be confident in your skills and abilities, and let people know how you can help.